

Amendments to the Claims:

Please cancel claim 4, amend claims 1 and 5-11 and add claims 12-20 as shown in the following listing of claims. This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended) A method of transmitting a multimedia content from a server to a client device through a distribution network upon request of said client device, said method using a plurality of groups of at least one set of files, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content, said encoded multimedia contents being obtained by encoding said multimedia content with various encoder characteristics, said groups being obtained by slicing said encoded multimedia contents in at least one set of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, each file containing a slice of an encoded multimedia content, said method comprising:

[[-]] a step of selecting a group from said plurality of groups,

[[-]] a step of selecting a slice from said slices, and

[[-]] a step of downloading, from said server to said client device, the file that contains the selected slice and belongs to the selected group using a communication unit of the client device,

said steps being executed at least once.

2. (original) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a step of calculating an estimation of the current transmission rate of the distribution network, wherein said group selection step takes said estimation into account.

3. (previously presented) A method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising a step of transmitting a client preference relating to said encoder characteristics from said client device to said server, and wherein said group selection step takes said client preference into account.

4. (canceled)

5. (currently amended) A server having access to a plurality of groups of at least one set of files, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content, said encoded multimedia contents being obtained by encoding a multimedia content with various encoder characteristics, said groups being obtained by slicing said encoded multimedia contents in at least one set of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, each file containing a slice of an encoded multimedia content, said server comprising:

~~[[-]] means for selecting a processor configured to select a slice from said slices,~~
~~[[-]] means for downloading a communication unit configured to download the file that~~
contains the selected slice and belongs to a selected group,
~~wherein the communication unit is said means being activated at least once upon~~
reception of a request directed to said multimedia content from said client device.

6. (currently amended) A server as claimed in claim 5, wherein the communication unit is further configured to receive ~~further comprising means for receiving~~ information relating to the current transmission rate of the distribution network from said client device, and wherein the processor is further configured to select ~~group selection means for selecting~~ said group on the basis of said information.

7. (currently amended) A server as claimed in claim 5, wherein the communication unit is further configured to receive ~~further comprising means for receiving~~ client preference data, and wherein the processor is further configured to select ~~group selection means for selecting~~ said group on the basis of said client preference data.

8. (currently amended) A client device comprising:

~~[[-]] means for connecting to a server through a distribution network,~~
~~[[-]] means for selecting a processor configured to select~~ a group of at least one set of files from a plurality of groups, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content, said encoded multimedia contents being obtained by encoding a multimedia

content with various encoder characteristics, said groups being obtained by slicing said encoded multimedia contents in at least one set of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, each file containing a slice of an encoded multimedia content, and

~~[[-]] means for sending a communication unit connected to a server through a distribution network, wherein the communication unit is configured to send at least one request to said server, said request being directed to said multimedia content and comprising an indication of the selected group.~~

9. (currently amended) A client device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the processor is further configured to calculate ~~further comprising means for calculating~~ an estimation of the current transmission rate of said distribution network, ~~and wherein said group selection means~~ and to take said estimation into account of selecting said group.

10. (currently amended) A client device as claimed in claim 8, wherein the communication unit is further configured to get ~~further comprising means for getting a client preference, and wherein the processor is further configured to said group selection means~~ take said client preference into account of selecting said group.

11. (currently amended) A network system comprising:

~~[[-]] a plurality of encoders with various encoder characteristics for encoding a multimedia content, thereby generating a plurality of encoded multimedia contents,~~

~~[[-]] a plurality of slicers for slicing said encoded multimedia contents in at least one set of slicing positions forming slices that can be decoded independently of each other, and for enclosing each slice of an encoded multimedia content in a file, thereby generating a plurality of groups of at least one set of files, each group being associated with an encoded multimedia content,~~

~~[[-]] a distribution network,~~

~~[[-]] a client device having means for connecting~~ connected to a server through said distribution network, wherein the client device comprises a first communication unit

~~configured to send and means for sending~~ at least one request to said server, said request being directed to said multimedia content, and

[[-]] a server having access to said plurality of groups, said server comprising:

a) ~~a processor configured to select means for selecting~~ a slice from said slices, and

b) ~~a second communication unit configured to download means for downloading~~ the file that contains the selected slice and belongs to a selected group, wherein the second communication unit is said means being activated at least once upon reception of a request directed to said multimedia content from said client device.

12. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of selecting a slice comprises selecting a most recent slice or a closest future slice to ensure continuity in transmitted multimedia content.

13. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein selecting the most recent slice or the closest future slice comprises:

comparing the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of a single set of slices; and

determining the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the single set of slices based on the comparing.

14. (new) The method of claim 12, wherein selecting the most recent slice or the closest future slice comprises:

comparing the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of more than one set of slices; and

determining the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the more than one set of slices based on the comparing.

15. (new) The server of claim 5, wherein the processor is further configured to select a most recent slice or a closest future slice to ensure continuity in transmitted multimedia content.

16. (new) The server of claim 15, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of a single set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the single set of slices based on the comparison.

17. (new) The server of claim 15, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of more than one set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the more than one set of slices based on the comparison.

18. (new) The network system of claim 11, wherein the processor is further configured to select a most recent slice or a closest future slice to ensure continuity in transmitted multimedia content.

19. (new) The network system of claim 18, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of a single set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the single set of slices based on the comparison.

20. (new) The network system of claim 18, wherein the processor is further configured to compare the time of arrival of the request of said client device with slicing positions of more than one set of slices and to determine the most recent slice and/or the closest future slice from the more than one set of slices based on the comparison.